



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, In the 2004-2005 school year, over 321,000
3 children with disabilities were served in special education
4 programs across Illinois; and

5 WHEREAS, The number of children in special education
6 programs has risen 12% in the last 5 years alone, and special
7 education accounts for approximately 21% of all education
8 spending; and

9 WHEREAS, The federal government has established a goal of
10 reimbursing 40% of the costs of special education incurred by
11 school districts, but it currently provides only 18% of costs
12 nationally and only 14% in Illinois; and

13 WHEREAS, Illinois has failed for decades to update
14 reimbursement rates for special education costs, with the last
15 reimbursement rate set in 1973 for special education orphanage
16 tuition, in 1985 for special education personnel, in 1978 for
17 special education private tuition, in 1976 for special
18 education summer school, and in 1965 for special education
19 transportation; and

20 WHEREAS, Illinois has continued to prorate special
21 education mandated categoricals at less than 100%, with the
22 FY06 budget prorating these mandated categoricals at 97%; and

23 WHEREAS, Even if Illinois fully funded mandated
24 categoricals at 100%, this would still only represent partial
25 funding, as the reimbursement rates are severely outdated; and

26 WHEREAS, Illinois school districts currently spend an
27 estimated \$1 billion from their own general education funds to
28 meet the unreimbursed costs of special education services that
29 are mandated by federal and State laws and administrative

1 rules; and

2 WHEREAS, Special education continues to represent a
3 growing financial burden on school districts as the need for
4 services increases while State and federal funding fails to
5 increase along with that need; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
7 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
8 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that a task force shall be created to
9 study current special education funding needs and to make
10 recommendations as to how the State can increase special
11 education funding and ease the financial burden on school
12 districts; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the task force shall consist of the State
14 Superintendent of Education (or his or her designee) plus 16
15 members appointed as follows: the House Majority Leader and the
16 House Minority Leader shall each appoint one representative,
17 the Senate President and the Senate Minority Leader shall each
18 appoint one senator, and these 4 leaders shall each appoint 3
19 public members representing the interests of special education
20 administrators and services, school districts, and disability
21 advocates; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the task force shall report its findings and
23 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by
24 January 1, 2007; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
26 transmitted to the State Superintendent of Education.